



Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Pilot Information for Districts and Schools

This communication provides you with information about the Smarter Balanced Pilot Test that will be administered this spring to students in grades 3–11. The pilot will be a computer-based administration in the content areas of English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics. Items are aligned to the Common Core State Standards and will include selected response, constructed response, and performance tasks.

The Smarter Balanced Pilot Test entails two approaches (or components) in its implementation.

- 1) “Volunteer” component that is open to all schools in Smarter Balanced states and will ensure that all schools have the opportunity to experience the basic functionality of the system
- 2) “Scientific” component that will impact a representative sample of schools and will provide critical data about the items developed to date as well as about how the system is functioning.

Participation and Expectations

- ***Volunteering Schools*** (*Released Test Items available during the second half of the pilot test window*):

All schools are encouraged to volunteer to participate in the Smarter Balanced Pilot Test. All schools that volunteer will receive an opportunity to administer a version of the assessment. District Test Coordinators received information regarding registering schools interested in volunteering for the pilot test.

- ***Scientifically Selected Schools*** (*two-week window between February 20 to May 10, 2013*):

Schools (approximately 10% in each state) will be selected to participate in this pilot based on predetermined demographic criteria, to ensure that the pilot items are administered to a representative sample of students. Selected schools will be contacted by the American Institutes for Research’s (AIR) recruiting partner, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), or by a designated state representative, between late November 2012 and January 2013 to be invited to participate in the scientific component of the Pilot Test.

Scientifically selected schools will be offered specific in-depth test administration training in the form of webinars and training modules and will be assigned a specific two-week window within the test window to test their students. Helpdesk support will be available to schools participating in the scientific sample starting January 2, 2013.



Administration Time

For scheduling purposes, schools should plan for approximately three hours of testing, per grade per content area. Testing times will vary depending on the subject area, grade, and type of module provided. Scientifically selected schools will be requested to administer the Pilot Test in no more than two grades. Only one content area (ELA or mathematics) will be administered for each grade within a school. The Release Test Items will be available for the other grades and content areas.

Technical Requirements for Participation

The online test delivery system will work on a variety of hardware/operating system configurations. Computers used for the Pilot assessment administration must meet certain minimum requirements to function effectively. Most current systems will work, with the caveat that faster processors and more hard drive space will improve performance. Detailed information on minimum specifications for Smarter Balanced systems will be made available to all Smarter Balanced states on December 4, 2012.

Accommodations and Testing Features

Some of the most common online accommodations and testing features will be available for the Pilot. The accommodations on the Pilot assessment will not be representative of the full array of accommodations and testing features that will ultimately be available.

Important Dates

The table below presents upcoming key activities related to the Smarter Balanced Pilot Test.

Activity	Dates
Interested schools volunteer to participate via the online survey	November 2012 – January 2013
Scientifically selected schools contacted to confirm their participation in the pilot	Late-November 2012 – January 2013
Online training test is available	Mid-January 2013
Smarter Balanced Pilot Test window	February 20 – May 10, 2013

Thank you for your support in this endeavor!

If you have any questions, please contact AIR at smarterbalancedpilot@air.org.